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SOLAR ELECTRIC LIGHT FUND USES SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE FACILITIES IN THOMONDE, HAITI

Washington, D.C. – November 2 – The Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF), a Washington, D.C. based nonprofit working to eliminate energy poverty through the use of solar power, today announced that a case study about its successful installation of 29 kilowatts of off-grid photovoltaic (PV) systems to provide electricity to the Thomonde Hospital in Haiti is available online from Trojan Battery Company. The system uses 126 PV modules and 48 Trojan batteries to power the hospital’s lighting, lab equipment, refrigeration, computers, and satellite communications system 24 hours a day, to help improve the quality of medical services provided to the community.

Prior to using solar power, the hospital, operated by the international medical organization Partners In Health, was meeting its energy needs through the use of a diesel generator that had a limited run-time, was expensive to operate, and was often rendered inoperable due to fuel source disruptions. The electricity generated by the solar system can provide nearly all of the energy the hospital needs, but the generator is being retained to provide back-up or emergency power when needed.

“Solar power can provide all of the electricity needed by facilities like this, but only if all of the system’s components can effectively perform at very high levels over many years,” says Bob Freling, executive director, SELF. “We coupled the Trojan batteries with solar modules made by SolarWorld, and a charge controller and inverters from OutBack Power Technologies, all of which were in-kind contributions towards the project. Our goal is to implement the best systems possible to provide the greatest benefits to the communities they operate in.”

“Trojan Battery’s Premium line of flooded deep-cycle batteries is specifically designed to be cycled regularly, and engineered to perform optimally under conditions where the batteries are not fully charged or discharged every day, a common occurrence in renewable energy applications,” states Bryan Godber, VP of Renewable Energy, Trojan Battery Company.

To maximize the long-term power and performance of the system, SELF trained hospital staff to meet any immediate onsite servicing needs, and also uses an Internet-based software monitoring system to remotely track the PV array’s voltage and output, the inverter output, and the charge levels of the batteries.

Additional details from the full case study can be found at:
http://www.trojanbatteryre.com/PDF/RE_CS_Thomonde%20Hospital.pdf.

About SELF

The Solar Electric Light Fund (SELF) is a Washington, D.C. based nonprofit working to eliminate energy poverty and combat climate change by bringing solar power and wireless Internet access to remote rural villages in the developing world. SELF has pioneered innovative applications of solar power for drip irrigation in Benin, telemedicine in the Amazon rainforest, vaccine refrigeration in Rwanda, online learning in South Africa, and microenterprise development in Nigeria. These successful pilot projects culminated in SELF's whole-village approach, or Solar Integrated Development model. Since 1990, SELF has completed projects in 20 countries, making it a leader among non-governmental organizations in realizing practical and cost-effective alternative energy solutions for rural villagers. For more information, please visit www.self.org.

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